

Staff in colleges of education demand negotiations before 'incorporation' into DCU

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A joint meeting of branch committees of the Irish Federation of University Teachers (IFUT) in Church of Ireland College of Education, Mater Dei Institute and St. Patrick's College Drumcondra will meet Wednesday April 16th to consider proposals from the Department of Education on incorporation of the three colleges into Dublin City University.

A meeting of 200 academic staff from the three colleges in Dublin on Wednesday night last expressed serious concern at plans to 'incorporate' their colleges into Dublin City University, without any negotiation with their trade union, the Irish Federation of University Teachers (IFUT).

The management of the colleges has now proposed a 'Negotiation Forum' to deal with the issues. IFUT General Secretary, Mike Jennings, said that it is "completely unacceptable that the management seem to have decided the terms of reference without consultation and are attempting to lay down the composition of the IFUT delegation in advance.

"We will continue our present policy on the process for incorporation of the three colleges through working groups or other planning meetings, until the incorporation proposals first address the issues of the impact on staff and until normal negotiation procedures are put in place to address issues such as workloads, job security, physical relocation and governance," he said.

The proposals have resulted from the 2012 Initial Teacher Education (Sahlberg) Report on the future of teacher education, which recommended reducing the number of teacher education colleges.

Mike Jennings says that while staff are prepared to discuss implementation of the Report, "it was our clear understanding following a meeting with the Minister for Education last November that he accepted the need for prior consultation, negotiation and agreement.

"Without any negotiation, let alone any agreement, it is now being proposed to 'incorporate' the three colleges into DCU. The three colleges would cease to exist in their current form and the incorporation is being depicted as a takeover of the three colleges by DCU," Mike Jennings says.

ENDS

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